

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Timor-Leste and South Pacific Scholarship Programs **ECA/A/E/EAP-11-03 USTL/USSP**

Office of Academic Exchange Programs **East Asia and Pacific Programs Branch**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the East Asia and Pacific Programs Branch of the Office of Academic Exchanges for the U.S. Timor-Leste and U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Programs. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) invites proposals to administer the U.S. Timor-Leste and/or U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Programs. Eligible applicants may submit a proposal to administer one or both of the scholarship programs. The recipient organization(s) are expected to carry out the responsibilities listed below. It should be understood that in the performance of all of the services, the Bureau must be consulted, especially in the resolution of any issues that may arise. The recipient(s) will also consult with U.S. Embassies Dili and/or Suva, especially with regard to participant recruitment and selection.

Responsibilities for these programs include:

1. Announcing and publicizing annual scholarship competition broadly;
2. Preparing and distributing application materials;
3. Advising prospective applicants;
4. Screening applications for minimum eligibility and required documentation;
5. Convening selection panels including ECA and/or U.S. Embassy representative as feasible and at least one country/regional expert, to conduct a transparent, merit-based selection process;
6. Notifying non-selected, alternate and primary candidates of final application status after consultation with ECA;
7. Reviewing candidate dossiers to determine competitiveness and suitability for program; reviewing academic credentials for completeness and relevance to proposed field of study;
8. Arranging round-trip travel for the participants from their home cities to their U.S. host institutions;
9. Ensuring that participants receive orientation upon arrival in the U.S.;
10. Enrolling participants in health coverage that meets J-1 visa requirements and assisting with claims as necessary;
11. Placing the participants at appropriate U.S. institutions for academic degree study;
12. Developing and facilitating cultural enrichment activities;
13. Assisting participants in arranging summer practical internships in Washington, DC or alternative cities

within the continental U.S. that offer similar opportunities;

14. Assisting participants with fulfillment of home-country community service requirement during program;
15. Monitoring participants' adjustment and academic performance;
16. In close consultation with ECA, evaluating the program and its impact on the participants and their communities during their stay in the U.S., and after they return to their home countries;
17. Managing financial aspects of the program (e.g., participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness insurance, host university agreements, activity costs);
18. Reporting programmatic, financial and statistical information to ECA;
19. Managing and monitoring the J-1 visa status of each participant;
20. Responding in a timely fashion to requests for information from ECA or U.S. embassies in the region relating to the participants and alumni.

For the overseas administration of the U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program, additional responsibilities include:

1. Convening interview panel, including ECA and/or U.S. Embassy representative as feasible;
2. Administering or contracting for administration of TOEFL/ITP TOEFL for applicants prior to final selection;
3. Evaluating English language skills of candidates and enroll in pre-academic English language courses;
4. Convening post-selection meeting in Timor-Leste with nominees;
5. Holding pre-departure orientation in country;
6. Retaining an in-country representative in Timor-Leste to administer candidate recruitment and pre-departure activities and serve as liaison with the U.S. Embassy in Dili.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Program administration activities should cover the time period August 2011 through August 2016. The projected participant caseload for Timor-Leste is expected to be approximately five (5) new students, and for the South Pacific approximately five (5) new students, for a total of approximately ten (10) participants for up to four years of academic study. This award will cover the entire program in the U.S. for the students selected. Selected USTL students under this cooperative agreement are expected to commence their U.S. study programs as early as January 2012; USSP students should be scheduled to arrive in late summer 2012. Students must return home following the completion of their ECA-funded U.S. programs.

In the U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship program, recruitment should include a broad pool of potential applicants, including those with no prior university study. ECA anticipates that funding will allow for up to three (3) of the selected participants to have no prior university credit at the time of selection. The proposal should describe how the recruitment and selection procedures will facilitate these outcomes, including specific measures to be taken to recruit high school graduates without undergraduate credit and disadvantaged applicants without prior travel experience.

For both programs, administrative responsibilities include the following broad categories: program planning and management; recruitment and selection; placement; orientations; participant supervision and support services; fiscal management and budgeting; and program reporting and evaluation. The proposal should include yearly budget projections for the full duration of the award. Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations.

Administration in the Region

For the U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program, applicants must propose a representative in Timor-Leste to work cooperatively with the U.S. Embassy in Dili to attend to publicity, recruitment, testing, selection support, pre-departure activities, and alumni outreach. In the South Pacific region, the applicant must propose a plan for working with the regional PAO at the U.S. Embassy in Suva to coordinate outreach in collaboration with educational institutions, media outlets, government offices and other organizations to ensure comprehensive publicity, recruitment, pre-departure planning, and alumni activities throughout the region. The eligible South Pacific countries are Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The regional PAO in Suva will be the applicant's primary point of contact for the other U.S. embassies in the region. U.S. embassies and program alumni may be able to provide some recruitment assistance and should be involved in the recruitment process, but the applicant will have primary responsibility for this and other aspects of program administration. The proposal should describe how the applicant will ensure appropriate oversight of all aspects of administration to ensure merit-based and transparent recruitment and selection processes.

Participants

The U.S. Timor-Leste and U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Programs emphasize the selection of young men and women with leadership experience or potential who will have a positive impact on their country's future development. The Bureau seeks scholarship participants who represent all aspects of their home country's diversity. Individuals living in the United States are not eligible and preference is given to those without significant U.S. or third-country undergraduate study experience.

Applicants in Timor-Leste should have functional English skills but often require pre-academic English training in the United States. South Pacific applicants will not require pre-academic English training, but at the Master's level, may benefit from up to one year of preparatory study.

Recruitment

The applicant organization should maintain the separate identities for the U.S. Timor-Leste and the U.S. South Pacific programs and must ensure that the Bureau and the Department of State are prominently identified as the program sponsor in all publicity and other scholarship program materials. The recruitment material and scholarship publicity should provide all relevant information to potential applicants. The key conditions, benefits, and terms of the program -- what is, and what is not covered under the award, as well as the need to fulfill the two-year home-residence requirement at the conclusion of the program -- should be described to candidates and nominees before they accept a scholarship and travel to the U.S. The description of study opportunities should include essential information for applicants who are unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system, and a policy on accompanying dependents should be described. Sample publicity and application materials should be included in an attachments section of the proposal.

Selection

The USTL program includes an interview component in Timor-Leste; the USSP program does not, given the

difficulty and expense of travel within the region, but applicant organizations are welcome to propose alternative approaches that might include an interview component if feasible. The applicant should outline selection criteria and the mechanics of the review, interview and selection processes to be used for the U.S. Timor-Leste and U.S. South Pacific Programs, respectively. A corresponding statement of the selection criteria should be included in the program announcement for student applicants. The leadership elements and the expectation that students will be active alumni following the conclusion of the program should be prominently reinforced in materials, communications, and selection methodology.

Pre-academic and English Language Training

For the U.S. Timor-Leste Program, applicants must describe plans for pre-academic preparation and English language training, and for administering TOEFL or other placement tests as required by U.S. host institutions. It is assumed that most USTL participants will need up to one year of English language instruction. Several levels of intensive English-language courses, from beginning to advanced, should be made available. The Bureau recommends that applicants be tested as part of the screening process using a locally available test instrument, and then given the TOEFL upon arrival in the U.S. to determine which level of English-language course is appropriate. Students who need additional instruction beyond the first year will be required to take the instruction at their placement universities.

Placement

The organization(s) will work with those participants who have prior undergraduate study to obtain transcripts from their home institutions and ensure that they receive maximum academic credit from U.S. institutions for prior overseas academic work to ensure successful degree completion within the award period. Academic placement of the students should be arranged at appropriate institutions throughout the United States. This step may involve applying on behalf of each student to up to five (5) institutions for which the student is competitive for admission, that match the student's academic objectives, that represent a broad cross-section of the United States, and that are consistent with the Bureau's program objectives. The organization(s) will work to obtain financial aid, scholarships, tuition awards, in-state tuition, etc., and explain the nature of, and funding for, the program to U.S. academic host institutions. Students may be clustered together or receive separate placements. Proposals should provide justification of the approach that will be used and should describe how students who are on program will be identified as participants in the U.S. Timor-Leste and U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Programs.

Pre-arrival Information

Proposals should include complete and detailed sample pre-arrival information that will be provided to students. Key points concerning academic requirements, academic departments and available courses, housing, what to pack, personal budgeting considerations, policies on dependents, and other critical issues should be included in the material. The material should be designed to serve as a useful post-arrival reference as well, supplemented with additional information.

Community Service

In order to keep participants engaged in their home communities while in the United States, they will be

expected to return home and take part in a four to five week community service activity over one summer during their scholarship program. The community service component will be mentioned in program advertisements and application materials. The organization(s) and host universities should devise ways to ensure that students satisfy this home-country community service requirement. Additionally, students will be expected to write a summary report of their experiences and how they might develop or work with community organizations following return to their home countries.

Internships

It is the goal of the program to provide all students with a paid or unpaid practical internship of four to five weeks in Washington, D.C. or alternative cities within the continental U.S., over one summer during their scholarship program. Internships must be related to the participants' field of study and/or career plans. This component is not intended to provide students with summer jobs. Cooperative agreement funds may be used to support the maintenance and other necessary costs associated with the internships such as staff travel to accompany the intern group to Washington, DC. The applicant organization(s) should estimate internship costs within the proposed budget. The organization(s) should also guide students in their search and be responsible for approving internship placements, monitoring students during their internships, and conducting an overall evaluation of the internship component of the program.

Program Activities

Applicants should describe plans for: pre-program orientation; goals and approaches for the academic portion of the program, including any special activities such as academic enrichment; cultural and community projects; evaluation and follow-up; and alumni tracking. Proposed enrichment activities might include volunteer work, student presentations to the local community, and matching of students with a local host family. Applicants must demonstrate that they can provide effective support systems (such as tutoring, counseling, host family, mentor or buddy system, consultation with student adviser and project director) to the students during the program. Applicants should assign an adviser who can serve as a central resource to students regarding their scholarship, the J-1 visa program, and cross-cultural adjustment. The adviser also serves as a link between the students and the Bureau as sponsor of the programs.

To support the mutual understanding goal of the exchange, the Bureau is particularly interested in opportunities for academic and enrichment experiences related to U.S. institutions, society, and culture. Students are expected to study in the United States throughout the term of the program, not to travel to third countries for study there, even with other sources of funding. The Bureau welcomes creative ideas for exposing students to American institutions, such as discussion groups on U.S. issues, visits to political campaign offices and polling places, attendance at school board or city council meetings, and civic-related volunteer work. Student attendance at museums, concerts, plays, and other cultural or community events should be encouraged and facilitated whenever possible.

As a way to enrich the campus experience and ensure greater interaction with American peers, students may be eligible for part-time campus employment not to exceed ten hours per week with ECA approval. Prior to eligibility, students must successfully complete one academic semester with at least a 3.0 grade point average.

Participant Monitoring and Evaluation

The proposal must discuss how the participants' progress in achieving program goals and objectives will be monitored at their U.S. host institutions (e.g. surveys, interviews, work plans). The proposal should describe the frequency of communication with the participants and with representatives of the U.S. host institutions, and outline performance goals or benchmarks for each semester in the United States. The proposal should also discuss the methods to be used for gauging the quality of program activities, tracking each participant's success, and monitoring and resolving any problems that arise. Program staff working with the participants should demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills, sensitivity, and a flexible approach that is responsive to each student and his or her circumstances. Senior management of the organization(s) should be involved as appropriate and available to assist as needed.

Participant Responsibilities

In accordance with J-1 Visa regulations, participants are expected to maintain the equivalent of a full course of study. They should also maintain at least a "B" average, and must comply with the academic and other requirements of the program and host institution. Students must return immediately to their home countries upon completion of the academic program. Students may be removed from the program for academic or behavioral misconduct. The final decision to remove a student will be made only after consultation with and written approval from ECA. Each student shall be required to read and sign Terms and Conditions.

Alumni Tracking and Follow-On Activities

Alumni activities are an important part of ECA's academic exchange programs. The recipient(s) will encourage, facilitate and promote participant and alumni use of the Department of State's Alumni website (www.alumni.state.gov). Alumni programming in the form of seminars, newsletters, and listservs provides critical program follow-on and serves to maximize and extend the benefit of the participants' program in the United States. The applicant organization(s) is strongly urged to outline how it will creatively organize and financially support alumni activities at a minimal cost to ECA. The applicant organization(s) should explain how these efforts will be coordinated with the ECA Bureau and embassy Public Affairs Sections, and with other non-governmental organizations that may in the future implement alumni activities for this program.

Alumni tracking is critical for measuring the longer-term impact of the program and for the implementation of worthwhile follow-on activities. The applicant organization(s) should describe how long-term linkages with alumni will be maintained and should detail how alumni records will be maintained and updated beyond the duration of the award. All statistical information on participants and alumni should be transferable to the alumni database maintained at ECA. Therefore, the applicant organization(s) is responsible for confirming that its system for collecting, storing, and transferring participant data is compatible with ECA's system.

Visa and Tax Requirements

All participants must be sponsored under an Exchange Visitor Program on a J-1 Visa. A representative from the organization(s) will be designated by ECA as an Alternate Responsible Officer and will be responsible for processing DS-2019 forms and ensuring that all needed documentation reaches the relevant overseas U.S.

consular offices. In addition, administration of these full scholarships must be in compliance with reporting and withholding regulations for federal, state, and local taxes as applicable.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items:

TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)

TAB B - Executive Summary

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

TAB C

Calendar of activities/itinerary

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

TAB D - Budget Submission

The proposal must include a comprehensive line-item budget, the details and format of which are contained in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). In addition, the proposal must include a comprehensive budget narrative demonstrating how costs were derived, as well as a year-by-year breakdown of expenses. The budget should start with a summary page that breaks out the program and administrative costs for each of the regional programs (Timor-Leste and South Pacific). The total amount of funding requested from ECA may not exceed \$500,000 for the Timor-Leste Program and \$500,000 for the South Pacific Program. It is anticipated that applicants submitting proposals for both programs may realize economies of scale that would allow for more than ten (10) participants. The number of participants who will take part should be clearly stated. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase the proposed budget in accordance with funding availability and the needs of the program.

As with other exchange programs, ECA is committed to the containment of costs consistent with overall program objectives and sound management. The program budget narrative should cite areas in which economies can be achieved, short of the full, allowable cost, and should document the proposed cost sharing in the most concrete way possible. Administrative and program costs must be cost-shared to the greatest extent feasible. Administrative costs must be kept to a minimum.

Applicant organization(s) may enroll participants in the ECA-funded Accident and Sickness Policy for Exchanges (ASPE) or another policy comparable in terms of cost and coverage. If the applicant chooses to use ASPE, \$75 per student per month should be deducted from the total request. These monies will be held by ECA and used to pay the insurance premiums. Should the applicant organization(s) choose to propose a comparable policy for USSP participants, detailed information on the policy must be provided and the cost per student per year should be included in the budget. The proposed alternate carrier may not offer less than the ASPE coverage and the cost may not exceed \$75 per month per participant. No overhead may be charged against insurance premiums.

TAB E

Letters of endorsement

Resumes

Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages.

TAB F

1.) SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs".

2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

3.) Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

REVIEW PROCESS

Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

The submission will be reviewed with the following review criteria in mind:

1. *Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Program Objectives:* Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

Each component of the program should be addressed. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. Proposals should explain how objectives will be met through specific activities to be carried out in the U.S., and in Timor-Leste and/or the South Pacific region.

2. *Institutional Capacity*: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should explain how the grantee organization will meet the requirements of students on this specific program. Proposals should describe the applicant's knowledge of or prior experience with, students from Timor-Leste, and/or the South Pacific nations, and/or other developing countries.

3. *Institution's Record/Ability*: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by the Bureau's Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

4. *Multiplier Effect/Impact and Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations*: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages. Anticipated results of the program in Timor-Leste and/or the South Pacific region as well as in the U.S. should be addressed. Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by the Bureau's geographic area desk and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner country(ies).

5. *Support of Diversity*: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support for the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities). To the fullest extent possible, scholarship recipients for this program should be representative of diversity in the following categories: country of origin/residence within country(ies); gender; ethnic community of origin within country(ies), where relevant; urban and rural regions (with emphasis on outreach beyond capital cities); and proposed fields of study within the general parameters outlined in this solicitation. Proposals should explain what efforts will be undertaken to achieve these goals. The U.S. study and enrichment programs should also incorporate and demonstrate the diversity of the American people, regions and culture. Efforts should be made to place eligible students in institutions of higher education that represent a broad cross-section of the United States.

6. *Project Evaluation*: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended. The grantee will be expected to submit quarterly program reports.

7. *Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing*: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All

other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

8. *Follow-on Activities*: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau-supported programs are not isolated events.

ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The award recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-5, 5th Floor
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, please contact Julia Findlay at (202) 632-9453, Office of Academic Exchange Programs/East Asia and Pacific Programs Branch; fax: (202) 632-9411; e-mail: FindlayJM@state.gov.